LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

What is claimed is:

1. (Original) A method in a data processing system for processing a request, the method comprising:

receiving the request;

responsive to a first hash value being present within the request, comparing the first hash value to a second hash value, wherein the second hash value represents a current policy configuration for a quality of service; and

responsive to a match between the first hash value and the second hash value, setting a quality of service based on information associated with the first hash value.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the first hash value and the information are located in a cookie within the request.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the cookie is located within a header of the request.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the request is a hypertext transport protocol request.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising:

responsive to an absence of a hash value in the request, identifying a policy rule for processing the request to form an identified policy rule;

identifying a classification for the request using the identified policy rule;

hashing the current policy configuration, of which the identified policy rule is a part, using a hashing algorithm to generate a current hash value; and

placing the current hash value and the information into the request.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein the hash value and the information are placed into a cookie.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the data processing system is a server.

8. (Original) A method in a data processing system for processing a request, the method comprising:

responsive to receiving a request containing a selected cookie in which the selected cookie includes a first hash value and information associated with the hash value, determining whether the first hash value corresponds to a second hash value, wherein the second hash value represents a current policy configuration for processing requests by the data processing system; and

responsive to a correspondence between the first hash value and the second hash value, processing the request using the information.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8 further comprising:

responsive to receiving a request containing the selected cookie, determining whether the selected cookie is stale;

responsive to an absence of a determination that the cookie being is stale, generating a new classification for the request; and

responsive to the cookie being stale, preventing initiation of the determining step.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9 further comprising:

responsive to an absence of the selected cookie, processing the request with the current policy configuration to generate a first classification for the request;

applying a hashing algorithm to the current policy configuration to generate the first hash value; and

placing the first hash value and information associated with the first hash value within a new cookie.

11. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the selected cookie includes a universal resource identifier, a user identification, and a user group identification.

12. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the information includes a quality of service indicator.

13. (Original) A data processing system comprising:

a bus system;

a communications unit connected to the bus system;

a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the memory includes a set of instructions; and

a processing unit connected to the bus system, wherein the processing unit executes the set of instructions to receive the request; compare the first hash value to a second hash value in response to a first hash value being present within the request, wherein the second hash value represents a current policy configuration for a quality of service; and set a quality of service based on information associated with the first hash value in response to a match between the first hash value and the second hash value.

14. (Original) A data processing system comprising:

a bus system;

a communications unit connected to the bus system;

a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the memory includes a set of instructions; and

a processing unit connected to the bus system, wherein the processing unit executes the set of instructions to determine whether the first hash value corresponds to a second hash value in response to receiving a request containing a selected cookie in which the selected cookie includes a first hash value and information associated with the hash value, wherein the second hash value represents a current policy configuration for processing requests by the data processing system; and process the request using the information in response to a correspondence between the first hash value and the second hash value.

15. (Original) A data processing system for processing a request, the comprising:

receiving means for receiving the request;

comparing means, responsive to a first hash value being present within the request, for comparing the first hash value to a second hash value, wherein the second hash value represents a current policy configuration for a quality of service; and

setting means, responsive to a match between the first hash value and the second hash value, for setting a quality of service based on information associated with the first hash value.

16. (Original) The data processing system of claim 15, wherein the first hash value and the information are located in a cookie within the request.

17. (Original) The data processing system of claim 16, wherein the cookie is located within a header of the request.

18. (Original) The data processing system of claim 15, wherein the request is a hypertext transport protocol request.

19. (Original) The data processing system of claim 15 further comprising:

first identifying means, responsive to an absence of a hash value in the request, for identifying a policy rule for processing the request to form an identified policy rule;

second identifying means for identifying a classification for the request using the identified policy rule;

hashing means for hashing the current policy configuration, of which the identified policy rule is a part, using a hashing algorithm to generate a current hash value; and

placing means for placing the current hash value and the information into the request.

20. (Original) The data processing system of claim 19, wherein the hash value and the information are placed into a cookie.

21. (Original) The data processing system of claim 15, wherein the data processing system is a server.

22. (Original) A data processing system for processing a request, the data processing system comprising:

determining means, responsive to receiving a request containing a selected cookie in which the selected cookie includes a first hash value and information associated with the hash value, for determining whether the first hash value corresponds to a second hash value, wherein the second hash value represents a current policy configuration for processing requests by the data processing system; and

processing means, responsive to a correspondence between the first hash value and the second hash value, for processing the request using the information.

23. (Currently Amended) The data processing system ~~method~~ of claim 22, wherein the determining means is a first determining means and further comprising:

second determining means, responsive to receiving a request containing the selected cookie, for determining whether the selected cookie is stale;

generating means, responsive to an absence of a determination that the cookie being is stale, for generating a new classification for the request; and

preventing means, responsive to the cookie being stale, for preventing initiation of the determining means.

24. (Original) The data processing system of claim 23, wherein the processing means is a first processing means and further comprising:

second processing means, responsive to an absence of the selected cookie, for processing the request with the current policy configuration to generate a first classification for the request;

applying means for applying a hashing algorithm to the current policy configuration to generate the first hash value; and

placing means for placing the first hash value and information associated with the first hash value within a new cookie.

25. (Original) The data processing system of claim 22, wherein the selected cookie includes a universal resource identifier, a user identification, and a group identification.

26. (Original) The data processing system of claim 22, wherein the information includes a quality of service indicator.

27. (Original) A computer program product in a computer readable medium for processing a request, the computer program product comprising:

first instructions for receiving the request;

second instructions, responsive to a first hash value being present within the request, for comparing the first hash value to a second hash value, wherein the second hash value represents a current policy configuration for a quality of service; and

third instructions, responsive to a match between the first hash value and the second hash value, for setting a quality of service based on information associated with the first hash value.

28. (Original) The computer program product of claim 27, wherein the first hash value and the information are located in a cookie within the request.

29. (Original) The computer program product of claim 28, wherein the cookie is located within a header of the request.

30. (Original) The computer program product of claim 27, wherein the request is a hypertext transport protocol request.

31. (Original) The computer program product of claim 27 further comprising:

fourth instructions, responsive to an absence of a hash value in the request, for identifying a policy rule for processing the request to form an identified policy rule;

fifth instructions for identifying a classification for the request using the identified policy rule;

sixth instructions for hashing the current policy configuration, of which the identified policy rule is a part, using a hashing algorithm to generate a current hash value; and

seventh instructions for placing the current hash value and the information into the request.

32. (Original) The computer program product of claim 31, wherein the bash value and the information are placed into a cookie.

33. (Original) The computer program product of claim 27, wherein the data processing system is a server.

34. (Original) A computer program product in a computer readable medium for processing a request, the computer program product comprising:

first instructions, responsive to receiving a request containing a selected cookie in which the selected cookie includes a first hash value and information associated with the hash value, for determining whether the first hash value corresponds to a second hash value, wherein the second hash value represents a current policy configuration for processing requests by the data processing system; and

second instructions, responsive to a correspondence between the first hash value and the second hash value, for processing the request using the information.

35. (Original) The computer program product of claim 34 further comprising:

third instructions, responsive to receiving a request containing the selected cookie, for determining whether the selected cookie is stale;

fourth instructions, responsive to an absence by a determination that the cookie being is stale, for generating a new classification for the request; and

fifth instructions, responsive to the cookie being stale, for preventing initiation of the determining step.

36. (Original) The computer program product of claim 35 further comprising:

sixth instructions, responsive to an absence of the selected cookie, for processing the request with the current policy configuration to generate a first classification for the request;

seventh instructions for applying a hashing algorithm to the current policy configuration to generate the first hash value; and

eighth instructions for placing the first hash value and information associated with the first hash value within a new cookie.

37. (Original) The computer program product of claim 34, wherein the selected cookie includes a universal resource identifier, a user identification, and a group identification.

38. (Original) The computer program product of claim 34, wherein the information includes a quality of service indicator.